

NSC BRIEFING

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6 DECEMBER 1955

VIOLENCE ON CYPRUS

I. Violence on Cyprus has increased in range and intensity during last three weeks.

A. Nationalist extremists have expanded their activities from isolated acts of violence against the British to something approaching guerrilla warfare.

1.

B. Have ambushed British military patrols, attacked military posts and military vehicles: during past three weeks at least 7 British soldiers killed, many more wounded.

C. Nationalists' terrorists organization (EOKA) ("Organization of Cypriot Fighters for Freedom") appears well-organized and trained.

1. EOKA can draw on the island's 410,000 ethnic Greeks for manpower and support.

2. EOKA reportedly operating schools for steady reinforcement, buildup its forces.

Intensified violence on island stems from two recent developments:

1. Cyprus Supreme Court's refusal (14 Nov) to review death sentence passed on Cypriot convicted of killing British soldier (date of execution not yet set);

2. UK declaration "state of emergency" on 26 Nov.

II. Nationalists apparently expect that continued violence campaign will force British concessions on self-determination.

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A. Both a spreading in terrorism and increasingly severe UK repressive measures appear probable.

1. We can expect assassination attempts against top British officials, more clashes between terrorist bands and British units (12,500 regulars).

B. Thusfar, only incident involving US residents [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] came on 24 November, when bomb was thrown at pickup truck driven by American.

1. No damage resulted, and driver gained impression from "demonstrators" (to whom he protested) he'd been mistaken for Britisher.

C. Nonetheless, US vehicles being kept off roads at night: personnel remaining indoors. Extended duty periods in US installations (from 4:00 P.M. to 8:00 A.M.) are being taken by single men, who eat and sleep at stations. Our officials estimate some deterioration of service.

D. No indication as yet that US personnel will be attacked by terrorists, but possibility of accidental involvement naturally concerns American civilians and dependents.

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